

**A CORRELATIONAL-COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GRADES 4 TO 6  
STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTAL ENCOURAGEMENT  
AND MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN  
LANGUAGE AT ZET LET KUNG KYANG COMMUNITY SCHOOL,  
KACHIN STATE IN MYANMAR**

**S Hkawng Nyo<sup>1</sup>  
Supit Karnjanapun<sup>2</sup>**

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**Abstract:** This study was conducted mainly to investigate the perception of parental encouragement and students' motivation for learning English as a foreign language, and if there is a significant difference among their perception of parental encouragement and motivation for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, Kachin state in Myanmar. This research designed as a quantitative, correlational-comparative study with the population of the study, 102 Grades 4-6 students from Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, Kachin State in Myanmar, during the academic year 2019-2020. Research to ANOVA data analysis, the study indicated that there was no significant difference among Grades 4 to 6 students' perceptions of motivation for learning English as a foreign language and no significant difference was found among their perceptions of parental encouragement for learning English as a foreign language. Pearson's products moment correlation suggested that there was a significant positive relationship between Grades 4 to 6 students' motivation for learning as a foreign language and their perceptions of parental encouragement for learning English as a foreign language. The result found that Grades 4 to 6 students' perceptions of parental encouragement and motivation for learning English as a foreign language was high. Finally, the students, teachers, school administrators, parents and future researchers were benefit from this study.

**Keywords:** Students' Perceptions; Parental Encouragement Motivation; English as a Foreign Language; A Correlational-Comparative Study; and grade 4, 5 & 6 students

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<sup>1</sup> M.Ed. Candidate in Curriculum & Instruction, Graduate School of Human Sciences, Assumption University, Thailand octoberngai@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor, Graduate School of Human Sciences, Assumption University, Thailand supitsetonhall@gmail.com

### **Introduction**

English has become language of the whole world use officially as a secondary language in every continent. It has become a dominant language and it plays a critical role in communication as it is widely used as a common language for communication in 21st century. Most of the products are labeled in English and a person was required to be fluent in both speaking and writing if they wanted to enter in the global market (Oxford Royale Academy, 2014).

In addition, Gardner (2006) defined that parental encouragement includes a vital role in children's feelings for their skills and good opinions in their foreign and second language learning although parents could not assist their children with foreign language ability. Parental encouragements had a solid influence on students' progress and keep for their positive motivation. Without parental encouragement and motivation, the academic performance of students could be poor. Parents' high anticipation can make their children to accomplish better, and could motivate their children to enjoy learning foreign language. Parental supportive could motivate the students to perform well in their academic learning. Parents who had full motivation for their children can make their kids to avoid the fear or challenges during the leaning of foreign language (Gardner, 2006).

Motivation has played a crucial role in learning as it has caused the learners more enjoyable to learn the subject, and once the learners were motivated, they would try and put a great effort to know the related subject they were studying (Siphora and Lynch 2017). Gardner (1985b) illustrated that it was a fundamental to understand the objectives of the students' language learning in order to know the reason why students were motivated.

In this study, the parental encouragement was importance for the children because there were many factors that influence students' motivation in learning academic development. The researcher has found out whether or not parental encouragement linked to the educational outcomes and students' motivation for learning English as a foreign language

### **Objectives**

Five objectives informed the qualitative research design, procedures and findings, as follows.

1. To determine the levels of Grades 4 to 6 students' perception of parental encouragement for learning English as foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community school, Kachin State in Myanmar.

2. To determine the levels of Grades 4 to 6 students' motivation of learning English as foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School in Kachin State, Myanmar.
3. To determine if there is a significant difference among Grade 4 to 6 students' perceptions of parental encouragement at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, Kachin State in Myanmar.
4. To determine if there is a significant difference among Grades 4 to 6 students of motivation for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School in Kachin State, Myanmar
5. To determine if there is a significant relationship of between the perceptions of parental encouragement and motivation for learning English as a foreign language of Grades 4 to 6 students at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School in Kachin State, Myanmar.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This research was based on the following theories: Gardner's (2010) socio education model to conduct on the motivation and perception of parental encouragement variable.

*Socio-educational model of second language acquisition.* Gardner's socio-educational model because it is widely used by many researchers to measure the level of students' motivation in second language acquisition. Gardner's theory focused on the studies established by Lambert's social psychological model (Gardner, 1985a). Gardner's socio-educational model mainly emphasize on the different ability and motivation of individual and focus on the factors that influence and support learners (Gardner, 2005).

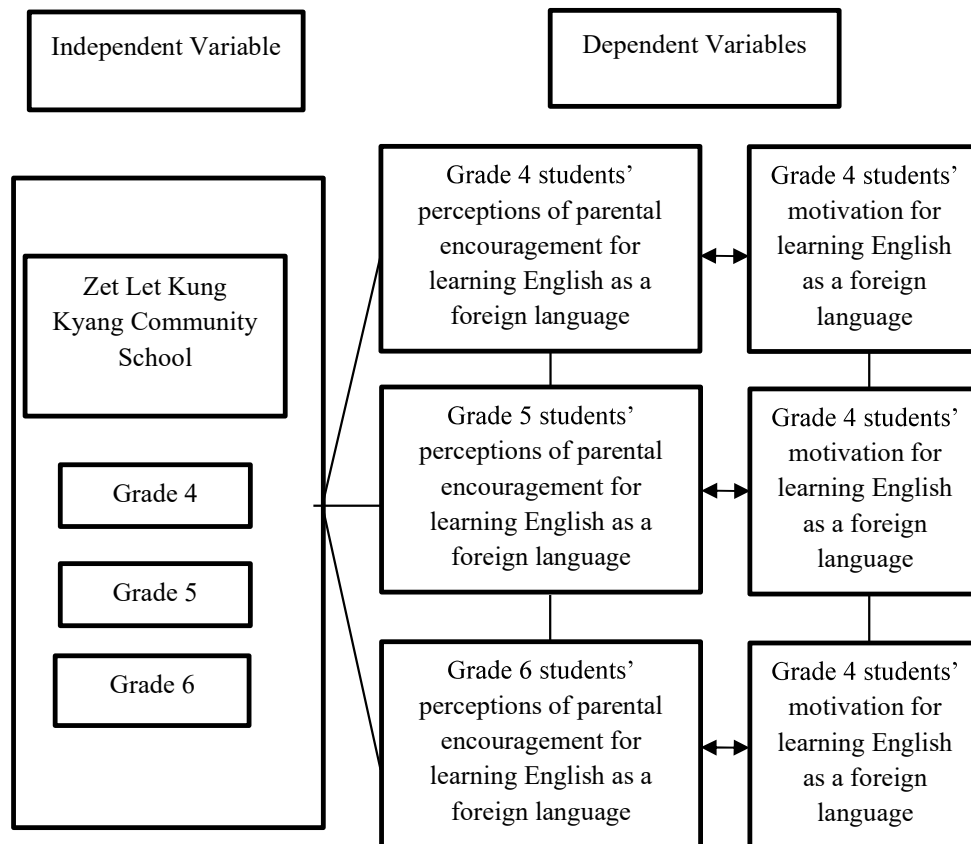
Gardner (1985b) claimed that motivation is a series of individual learner's effort, desire, perception and attitude toward learning language to be able to achieve the set goals and success. Gardner (2005) discovered that the performance of highly motivated students is better than those who have lower level or lack of motivation. Gardner also mentioned that the learner's desire to achieve their targeted goals and attitude toward the learning condition are key variables that make-up motivation.

Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). Gardner developed the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) which is a research instrument based on the social-educational model of second language acquisition. This survey items are aimed to measure the variables and components of the model (Gardner, 2005). The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) consists of 11 subscales with a total of 104 items. Among several components of Gardner's motivation, the researcher applied three components of motivation

in order to measure the level of students' motivation for English learning: motivational intensity, desire to learn English, and attitudes toward learning English. Part of component has its positively worded and negatively worded items except the integrative and instrumental orientation components. The researcher adapted from the AMTB questionnaire of 2004 international version in this study.

### Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of this study, describing Grade 4 to 6 students at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School whether three subscales motivation for learning English and parental encouragement of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between Grade 4 to 6 students perception of parental encouragement and there motivation level of learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community Schol, Kachin State in Myanmar.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study**

### **Literature Review**

From 1824 to 1948, Myanmar was one of the British colonized countries. During the British rule, English language was regarded as official language to communicate in public administration and the medium of instruction in education (Lwin, 2010). During, British colonial period, English medium schools (also known as Anglo Vernacular Schools), controlled by Christian missions, were purely English schools, no Burmese or other local languages were spoken (Clifford & Htut, 2015).

Currently, in Myanmar, students have to undergo the basic education for 13 years (including a Kindergarten year) and English language is taught in the school as a compulsory subject in all levels. However, due to the several reasons, English language skills and proficiency still declined drastically (Phyu, 2017).

There are several substantial studies which investigated motivation for second/foreign language learning (MacIntyre, Potter & Burns, 2012). Motivation plays a crucial role in learning as it causes the learners more enjoyable to learn the subject, and once the learners are motivated, they will try and put a great effort to know the related subject they are studying (Siphora and Lynch 2017).

Gardner's socio-educational model claimed that parental encouragement is one of the major factors that has a great influence on students' language achievement. There are many substantial research studies illustrated that there is significant relationship between parental encouragement and students' motivation in learning a second language. (Anguiano, 2008; Lawrence & Barathi, 2016; Olige, 2008).

### **Method/Procedures**

This research was designed as a quantitative and a correlation-comparative study which involved descriptive and inferential statistics. The population of this research was the students from Grade 4, 5 and 6 at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School at Kachin State in Myanmar. The researcher adapted from Gardner's AMTB which has 38 items is used to collect data.

### **Research Instrument**

In this study, perception of parental encouragement and motivation for learning English as a foreign language questionnaire adapted from Gardner's AMTB were used as research instruments. There are 8 items in perception of parental encouragement questionnaire and 30 items in motivation questionnaire.

It is found that the Attitude/ Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) has been popular among many of the previous researchers in assessing the effective components of second language acquisition. Although the initial concepts and items of the instrument were created by Gardner (1958b), it was redeveloped by Gardner and Lambert in 1972. The developing process of full items regarding with internal consistency reliability was done by Gardner and Smythe (1975a) and presented in 1981.

### Findings

Research Objective One. To determine the levels of Grades 4 to 6 students' perceived perceptions of parental encouragement for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, Kachin state in Myanmar. The finding showed that the Grade 4 students' (M= 5.30) and (SD=.47). It Showed Grade 5 students' (M= 5.09) and (SD=.65). It described for Grade 6 students, (M= 5.38) and (SD=.30). The general mean for all the Grades was in the range between 4.51 - 5.50, which mean the students' perception of parental encouragement for learning English as a foreign language was high.

Research Objective two. The finding obtained regared the research was summarized. The finding showed the Grade 4 students's (M=5.02) and (SD=.53). It shwed Grade 5 students' (M= 4.85) and (SD=.62). It described for Grade 6 students, (M= 5.09) and (SD=.30). The general mean score for all the grades was in the range of 4.51-5.50. Overall the interpretation that the students' motivation for learning English as a foreign language also high.

Research Objective Three. To determine if there was a significant difference between Grades 4 to 6 students' perceptions of parental encouragement for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, Kachin State in Myanmar. The research findings showed there was no significant difference between Grades 4 to 6 students' perception of parental encouragement for learning English because its value was greater than the significance level of .05  $F(2, 99) = .19, p < .23$ .

Table 3. *Summary of Finding for Perception of Parental Encouragement*

Level	N	M	SD	dfs		F	p
				Between group	Within group		
Grade 4	37	5.30	.47	2	99	.20	.23
Grade 5	51	5.27	.65				
Grade 6	14	5.40	.58				

Research Objective Four. To determine if there is a significant difference between Grades 4 to 6 students' motivation for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, Kachin State in Myanmar. The research finding showed that there is no significant difference between Grades 4 to 6 students' motivation for learning English because which result  $F(2, 99) = .19, p < .83$  which is greater than the significance level of .05.

Table 4. *Summary of Finding for Motivation*

Level	N	M	SD	dfs		F	p
				Between group	Within group		
Grade 4	37	5.02	.52	2	99	.19	.83
Grade 5	51	4.85	.61				
Grade 6	14	5.09	.30				

Research Objective 5. To determine if there is a significant relationship between Grades 4 to 6 students' perceived perceptions of parental encouragement and their perceptions of motivation for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, Kachin State, Myanmar. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was employed to analyze relationship of the variables.

**Grade 4.** The presents correlation between Grade 4 students perceived perception of parental encouragement for learning English as a foreign language and their motivation for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, Myanmar.

Table 5. *Correlation Between Grade 4 Students Perceived Perception of Parental Encouragement for Learning English as a Foreign Language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School*

Variables	1	2
1. Parental encouragement	-	-
2. Motivation for learning English	.53** (.01)	

*Note.* \*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (statistical significance level set at  $p = .05$ , two-tailed).  $p$  – value appear within the parenthesis below the correlation coefficients.

Table 5 shows that the two variables are moderately strong and positive relationship ( $r = .53, p = .01$ ) at the significant level of .01. There was a significant relationship between Grade 4 students' perceived perceptions of

parental encouragement and their perceptions of motivation for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School Kachin State in Myanmar. The coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) for these variables is .27, with indicates 27 % of the variance in Grade 4 students' perceived perceptions of parental encouragement is accounted for by their perceptions of motivation for learning English as a foreign language.

**Grade 5.** The following table presents correlation between Grade 5 students perceived perception of parental encouragement for learning English as a foreign language and their motivation for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, Myanmar.

Table 6. *Correlation Between Grade 5 Students Perceived Perception of Parental Encouragement for Learning English as a Foreign Language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School*

Variables	1	2
1. Parental encouragement	-	-
2. Motivation for learning English	.49** (.01)	

*Note.* \*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (statistical significance level set at  $p = .05$ , two-tailed).  $p$  – value appear within the parenthesis below the correlation coefficients.

Table 6 shows that the two variables are moderately, positively and significantly correlated ( $r = .49$   $p = .01$ ) at the significant level of .01. There was a significant relationship between Grade 5 students' perceived perceptions of parental encouragement and their perceptions of motivation for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School Kachin State in Myanmar. The coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) for these variables is .24, with indicates 24 % of the variance in Grade 5 students' perceived perceptions of parental encouragement is accounted for by their perceptions of motivation for learning English as a foreign language.

**Grade 6.** The following table present correlation between Grade 6 students perceived perception of parental encouragement for learning English as a foreign language and their motivation for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, Myanmar.

Table 7. *Correlation Between Grade 6 Students Perceived Perception of Parental Encouragement for Learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School*

Variables	1	2
1. Parental encouragement	-	-
2. Motivation for learning English	-.20 (.49)	

*Note.* (statistical significance level set at  $p = .05$ , two-tailed).  $p$  – value appear within the parenthesis below the correlation coefficients.

Table 7 shows that the two variables were no significantly correlated ( $r = -.20$ ,  $p = .49$ ). There was no significant difference between Grade 6 students' perceived perceptions of parental encouragement and their perceptions of motivation for learning English as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School Kachin State in Myanmar.

## Discussion

This section presents about the researcher finding of the current study by relation them the finding of the previous research studies. In this study, both motivational level and perception of the parental encouragement for learning English as a foreign language interpretation were statistically high. According to (Gardner 2010) that the curriculum, teacher, the materials and quality of instruction influence the individual's level of motivation to learn a second language.

The parental encouragement is a crucial influential factor for students in learning foreign language. The parents' encouragement and support can play a great role in academic success of their children's education by encouraging their children with positive words and showing interests in their learning. According to Gould (2009), the students who received higher parental encouragement have higher students' motivation in learning and academic achievement than students with lower perceived parental encouragement for learning.

Motivation state is the most instrumental key for students to achieve better academic success in learning foreign language. According to Gardner (1958) students who have great desire to study for the language, put more effort to learn English effectively because they have positive opinions regarding to learning condition. Students' academic achievements may differ depending on their motivation. According to Gardner and Lambert (1959) integrative motivation is more than instrumental motivation in antecedently to enhance achievement in learning a second language. Based on the researcher teaching

experiences in Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, students' personal can't get the same achievement which base on the motivation affects, different essential qualities, various attitudes and there supporting background. Also (Hancock,2007) described that students who have high motivation are likely to become successful in learning than the students with lower motivation. Consequently, student's motivation and those become successful are interrelated.

In this study, the findings regarding to the levels of Grade 4-6 students' perceptions of motivation for learning English language were high and no significant difference was found among their perceptions of motivation for learning English language. Wilson (2012) noticed that the supporting from parents to their children is one of the main points to motivate students to study the languages well. The researcher assumed that another reason would be that the students from this school have more opportunities to explore their learning through sharing, observing and participation in different kinds of activities. According to (Gardner 2010) that the curriculum, teacher, the materials and quality of instruction influence the individual's level of motivation to learn a second language.

The finding of this study indicated that there was a statistically significant positive relationship between Grade 4 and 5 students' motivation and parental encouragement for learning English as foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School, Kachin State, Myanmar. Grade 6 students' perceptions of parental encouragement and motivation for learning English as a foreign language was a negative relationship as a foreign language at Zet Let Kung Kyang Community School. The current study's finding was in line with many previous studies. According to the findings of Bindu and Aruna (2014) as cited in Marina (2018), students with great parental supports were higher in motivation than those of with low parental supports.

Another study by Jun and Lynch (2015) also investigated that there was a relationship between Grades 4-6 students' level of motivation and parental encouragement at Ladprao Bilingual School in Bangkok. The research stated that students' motivation was increased when their perceived parental encouragement was high

According to Penjak and Karninčić (2015), the parental encouragement and motivation influence students for the active participation in academic life. Parents' support with warmth are directly associated with the academic performance of the children. Parents need to devote their time to their children

to support for their learning such as guiding for their learning and listening to what their children want to do based on the learning.

### **Recommendation**

According to the finding of this study, the researcher would like to some give recommends for students, teacher, school administrators, student's parents and future researcher as below.

#### *Recommendations for Students:*

This research finding of the study, for the recommended that students themselves should maintain this positive parental encouragement by having regular talks with their parents regarding with their English language learning or by convincing their parents to support with their English language learning.

#### *Recommendations for Teachers*

The researcher strongly to recommends the teachers should help maintain the students' high motivation to learn English as foreign language with continuous use of different learning activities such as learning with games, showing movies, group discussion and presentation by creating fun and challenging English learning environment.

#### *Recommendations for School Administrators*

According to this study finding of the research, the school administrators should raise parental awareness regarding with how they can help and support their children's English language learning by arranging teacher-parent meeting at least twice a year, one at the beginning and another one in the middle of the school year.

#### *Recommendations for Students' Parents*

The researcher would like to recommend for parents are suggested to show active encouragement and interests in their children's English language learning by participating in school activities related to English language learning activities such as play shows and storytelling, supporting learning materials such as English graded reader books, Kids English movies and songs, and helping them with their school's English work such as helping with pronunciations and writings.

#### *Recommendations for Future Researchers*

For future researchers are suggested to add larger population sample and to study not only within community-based school context but also within government school or private school context, so that better understanding of the relationship between the variables would be achieved in different school

contexts. It is also recommended to add the variable: academic achievement in order to find out interesting relationships between the parental encouragement and motivation for learning English as a foreign language with academic achievement.

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